

Environmental Protection Agency

§ 13.23

(4) Upon receipt of the official personnel file from EPA, the new paying agency will resume collection from the employee's current pay account and will notify both the employee and EPA of the resumption.

(o) *Interest, penalty and administrative cost.* EPA will assess interest and administrative costs on debts collected under these procedures. The following guidelines apply to the assessment of these costs on debts collected by salary offset:

(1) A processing and handling charge will be assessed on debts collected through salary offset under this section. Where offset begun prior to the employee's receipt of the 30-day written notice of the proposed offset, processing and handling costs will only be assessed after the expiration of the 30-day notice period and after the completion of any hearing requested under paragraph (d) of this section or waiver consideration under paragraph (g) of this section.

(2) Interest will be assessed on all debts not collected within 30 days of either the date of the notice where the employee has not requested a hearing within the allotted time, completion of a hearing pursuant to paragraph (d) of this section, or completion of waiver consideration under paragraph (g) of this section, whichever is later. Interest will continue to accrue during the period of the recovery.

(3) Deductions by salary offset normally begin prior to the time for assessment of a penalty. Therefore, a penalty charge will not be assessed unless deductions occur more than 120 days from the date of notice to the debtor and penalty assessments have not been suspended because of waiver consideration by EPA.

(p) *Non-waiver of right by payment.* An employee's payment under protest of all or any portion of a debt does not waive any rights which the employee may have under either these procedures or any other provision of law.

(q) *Refunds.* EPA will promptly refund to the employee amounts paid or deducted pursuant to this section, the recovery of which is subsequently waived or otherwise found not owing to the United States. Refunds do not bear

interest unless specifically authorized by law.

(r) *Time limit for commencing recovery by salary setoff.* EPA will not initiate salary offset to collect a debt more than 10 years after the Government's right to collect the debt first accrued, unless facts material to the right to collect the debt were not known and could not have been known through the exercise of reasonable care by the Government official responsible for discovering and collecting such debts.

§ 13.23 Salary offset when EPA is not the creditor agency.

The requirements below apply when EPA has been requested to collect a debt owed by an EPA employee to another Federal agency.

(a) *Format for the request for recovery.*

(1) The creditor agency must complete fully the appropriate claim form specified by OPM.

(2) The creditor agency must certify to EPA on the debt claim form: The fact that the employee owes a debt; the date that the debt first accrued; and that the creditor agency's regulations implementing 5 U.S.C. 5514 have been approved by OPM and send it to the Director, Financial Management Division (2734R), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20460.

(3) If the collection is to be made in installments, the creditor agency must also advise EPA of the number of installments to be collected, the amount of each installment, and the commencement date of the first installment, if a date other than the next established pay period.

(4) Unless the employee has consented in writing to the salary deductions or signed a statement acknowledging receipt of the required procedures and this information is attached to the claim form, the creditor agency must indicate the actions it took under its procedures for salary offset and the dates of such actions.

(b) *Processing of the claim by EPA—(1) Incomplete claims.* If EPA receives an improperly completed claim form, the claim form and all accompanying material will be returned to the requesting (creditor) agency with notice that OPM procedures must be followed and

§ 13.24

40 CFR Ch. I (7–1–07 Edition)

a properly completed claim form must be received before any salary offset can be taken. The notice should identify specifically what is needed from the requesting agency for the claim to be processed.

(2) *Complete claims.* If the claim procedures in paragraph (a) of this section have been properly completed, deduction will begin on the next established pay period. EPA will not review the merits of the creditor agency's determinations with respect to the amount or validity of the debt as stated in the debt claim form. EPA will not assess a handling or any other related charge to cover the cost of its processing the claim.

(c) *Employees separating from EPA before a debt to another agency is collected—*(1) *Employees separating from Government service.* If an employee begins separation action before EPA collects the total debt due the creditor agency, the following actions will be taken:

(i) To the extent possible, the balance owed the creditor agency will be liquidated from subsequent payments of any nature due the employee from EPA in accordance with § 13.22(1);

(ii) If the total amount of the debt cannot be recovered, EPA will certify to the creditor agency and the employee the total amount of EPA's collection; and

(iii) If EPA is aware that the employee is entitled to payments from the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund or other similar payments, it will forward a copy of the claim form to the agency responsible for making such payments as notice that a debt is outstanding. EPA will also send a copy of the claim form to the creditor agency so that it can file a certified claim against the payments.

(2) *Employees who transfer to another Federal agency.* If an EPA employee transfers to another Federal agency before EPA collects the total amount due the creditor agency, the following actions will be taken:

(i) EPA will certify the total amount of the collection made on the debt; and

(ii) The employee's official personnel folder will be sent to the new paying agency. (It is the responsibility of the creditor agency to ensure that the col-

lection is resumed by the new paying agency.)

Subpart D—Compromise of Debts

§ 13.24 General.

EPA may compromise claims for money or property where the claim, exclusive of interest, penalty and administrative costs, does not exceed \$20,000. Where the claim exceeds \$20,000, the authority to accept the compromise rests solely with DOJ. The Administrator may reject an offer of compromise in any amount. Where the claim exceeds \$20,000 and EPA recommends acceptance of a compromise offer, it will refer the claim with its recommendation to DOJ for approval. The referral will be in the form of the Claims Collection Litigation Report (CCLR) and will outline the basis for EPA's recommendation. EPA refers compromise offers for claims in excess of \$100,000 to the Commercial Litigation Branch, Civil Division, Department of Justice, Washington, DC 20530, unless otherwise provided by Department of Justice delegations or procedures. EPA refers offers of compromise for claims of \$20,000 to \$100,000 to the United States Attorney in whose judicial district the debtor can be found. If the Administrator has a debtor's firm written offer for compromise which is substantial in amount but the Administrator is uncertain as to whether the offer should be accepted, he may refer the offer and the supporting data to DOJ or GAO for action.

§ 13.25 Standards for compromise.

(a) EPA may compromise a claim pursuant to this section if EPA cannot collect the full amount because the debtor does not have the financial ability to pay the full amount of the debt within a reasonable time, or the debtor refuses to pay the claim in full and the Government does not have the ability to enforce collection in full within a reasonable time by enforced collection proceedings. In evaluating the acceptability of the offer, the Administrator may consider, among other factors, the following:

(1) *Individual debtors.* (i) Age and health of the debtor;

(ii) Present and potential income;